

Thank you.

tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:27 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. A

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Tax Legislation *May 10, 2006*

The tax cuts we passed in recent years are working to fuel America's economic expansion. Our progrowth policies have helped the economy create more than 5.2 million jobs since August of 2003, and last year, our economy grew faster than that of any other major industrialized nation. By extending key Capital Gains and Dividends tax relief, the House has taken an important step to continue to help hard-working

Americans and to keep our economy strong and growing. I appreciate the House Leadership and Chairman Bill Thomas for their hard work.

I urge the Senate to vote swiftly so that I can sign this bill into law and put a stop to a massive tax hike that would be disastrous for small businesses, our economy, and all working Americans.

Remarks on the Terrorist Surveillance Program *May 11, 2006*

After September the 11th, I vowed to the American people that our Government would do everything within the law to protect them against another terrorist attack. As part of this effort, I authorized the National Security Agency to intercept the international communications of people with known links to Al Qaida and related terrorist organizations. In other words, if Al Qaida or their associates are making calls into the United States or out of the United States, we want to know what they're saying.

Today there are new claims about other ways we are tracking down Al Qaida to prevent attacks on America. I want to make some important points about what the Government is doing and what the Government is not doing.

First, our intelligence activities strictly target Al Qaida and their known affiliates. Al Qaida is our enemy, and we want to

know their plans. Second, the Government does not listen to domestic phone calls without court approval. Third, the intelligence activities I authorized are lawful and have been briefed to appropriate Members of Congress, both Republican and Democrat. Fourth, the privacy of ordinary Americans is fiercely protected in all our activities.

We're not mining or trolling through the personal lives of millions of innocent Americans. Our efforts are focused on links to Al Qaida and their known affiliates. So far we've been very successful in preventing another attack on our soil.

As a general matter, every time sensitive intelligence is leaked, it hurts our ability to defeat this enemy. Our most important job is to protect the American people from another attack, and we will do so within the laws of our country.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:03 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Sec-

retary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Commencement Address at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Biloxi, Mississippi May 11, 2006

Thanks for the warm welcome. President Lott; members of the faculty, staff, and administration; distinguished guests; family, friends, and, most importantly of all, the graduating class of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College: This afternoon, we celebrate commencement in a stadium that is still under repair, near streets lined with temporary housing, in a region where too many lives have been shattered, and there has never been a more hopeful day to graduate in the State of Mississippi.

I am proud to stand before some of the most determined students at college or university in America. Over these past 9 months, you have shown a resilience more powerful than any storm. You continued your studies in classrooms with crumbling walls. You lost homes and slept in tents near campus to finish courses. You cleared debris during the day, and you went to class at night. You worked past exhaustion to catch up. By your determination to reach this day, you have sent a message to our Nation and the world: Mississippi is coming back, and it's going to be better than ever before.

You have sent a message, and I've come with a message of my own: This Nation honors your dedication. We're inspired by your optimism, and we're going to help this great State of Mississippi rebuild.

I'm honored to be the first sitting President to address a community college commencement. Recognizing this is a grand occasion, I wanted some tips from the best speaker I know, so I went to the First Lady, Laura. [Laughter] I asked her what

I should talk about, and she said, "You ought to talk about 15 minutes." [Laughter] Listen, I've learned her advice is worth taking. She sends her best to you all.

Today I want to share a few thoughts on the history you've seen this year and the history you will make once you leave this fine college. For some of you, graduation day has been a long time in the making. Many of you have large responsibilities beyond school, such as jobs and families to care for, and none of those roles are part-time. Others here are taking a first step toward further education at one of Mississippi's fine universities. And on this special afternoon, some of you are fulfilling the dreams of generations by becoming the first person in your family to graduate from college.

This college is also part of a strong military community, and it's obvious some of you have earned your degree while serving your Nation in uniform. And I'm proud to be your Commander in Chief. There are also military family members in the graduating class, including the Levens family of Long Beach. Margaret Levens and her son, Matt, are getting their degrees, and they're both carrying pictures of a loved one who they remember today. Earlier this year, Donnie Levens, Margaret's son and Matt's brother, was killed in a helicopter crash while his Marine unit was fighting terrorists near the Horn of Africa. Margaret says Donnie's courage inspired her to complete her studies. She said, "I've never been a quitter. Donnie was never a quitter either. He had a job to do, and